

CHURCH NEWS

FROM THE NORTHERN COUNTRIES

Edited by

THE NORTHERN ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

Sigtuna, Sweden

Director: Dr. HARRY JOHANSSON, Sigtuna, Sweden

Editor: Rev. JOHS. LANGHOFF, Øster Egesborg per Mern, Denmark

No. 58

May 27th, 1960.

DENMARK

Lively Debate on State Subsidies and Religious Influence.

About a year ago, as mentioned in CN No. 46, strong accusations were brought against the management of the Christian hospital for epileptics in Denmark, called "Filadelfia", and the Minister of Social Affairs set up an impartial committee to go into the matter. The main accusations which were supported by the chief Social-Democratic newspaper "Aktuelt" alleged that the patients were subjected to religious pressure and that violation of certain rules for the patients was punished unnecessarily hard. It was emphasized that the "Filadelfia" is the only hospital in Denmark for epileptics, thus leaving the patients with no other choice if wanting a religiously neutral hospital, and that the State which covers almost all the running expenses through subsidies should also have a say in the matter of the spiritual atmosphere of the hospital.

The committee's report is now available. A number of the allegations are turned down as being unfounded, but various improvements are suggested, such as, among others, with regard to occupying the patients. As for the religious influence, the report says that patients who wish to take part in religious events should be allowed to do so within reasonable limits, but that the religious activity should not go beyond what is usual in other hospitals. In this connection attention is drawn to the custom of saying grace and having short devotions at meals so that patients not wanting to take part in such religious activities actually have no possibility of avoiding them.

On the publication of the report the "Aktuelt" has renewed its attacks on the "Filadelfia" hospital and demanded the resignation of the Board. Several other newspapers have joined in the attacks while still others maintain that the State should have no influence on the spiritual climate of private institutions even when these receive public support. Thus the "Kristeligt Dagblad" writes:

"It must be supposed that responsible politicians are aware that this problem involves a matter of pure principle. According to sound Danish democratic tradition the State cannot expect spiritual regimentation in return for financial support to private philanthropic enterprises or training colleges, folk high schools and similar institutions. Otherwise the basis for co-operation between private and official initiative would disappear and we should end up in the well-known, but not commendable, pattern of modern "democracy". Here is a point where the front must be held."

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Religious Influence on State Expenditures and Religious Influence

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Prize Contest on the Church in the City.

The Copenhagen Church Foundation which for the past 70 years has done a great piece of work for the erection of new churches in the ever-growing Capital has arranged a theological prize contest on the subject of "The Parish Congregation and its Service in the City of To-day". The time limit is twelve months and a prize of 5,000 Danish crowns will be awarded to the best entry or entries. The sum has been donated anonymously for the purpose and the committee of judges will be composed of the Professors Hal Koch and N.H. Sjøe; Mr. Mogens Hvidt, High Court Judge; and Secretary General W.W. Westergård Madsen. Among the questions to be answered are: "Can we possibly speak of the Church as the Body of Christ when describing the actually existing Church with its manifold services?" - "Are there any points in the New Testament conception of the congregation and Luther's emphasis on the general priesthood which are wanting in the mission and service of a Danish parish congregation?"

A Second Sports Minister in Denmark.

There are now two sports ministers in the Danish Lutheran National Church. Besides Rev. Gårn Larsen, Skjold, a former football player and now for several years a specially appointed sports minister, the Bishop of Copenhagen has now appointed Rev. Sejr Fink, Rindum, as another sports minister. Rev. S. Fink was a teacher of physical training before the ordination.

A Mosque Being Planned for also in Copenhagen.

As in Oslo, Stockholm and Helsinki (Helsingfors) where plans for the erection of mosques have been published recently, news is now being received about the erection of a mosque in Copenhagen. The Danish Moslem congregation only counts some 20 members, but to this comes a number of Arabs more or less permanently resident in the Danish Capital. A Danish Moslem has given the site, and the plan is to build a mosque with one cupola and two minarets. The Danish Moslems belong to the Ahmadiyya-movement.

Yet Another Methodist Minister Leaves His Church.

Besides Rev. Povl-Erik Bjerno, Esbjerg (see CN No. 57), another Methodist minister, Rev. Henning Hall, Randers, has now decided to resign his office and leave the Church because of ecclesiastical and religious views diverging from those of the leaders of the Church.

Roman-Catholic Church Offered for Lutheran Services.

The Lutheran church at Åkirkeby is about to be repaired, and the Roman-Catholic priest in the place, with the consent of his bishop, has therefore offered the Lutheran congregation the loan of the Roman-Catholic church for divine services. The Lutheran Rector has expressed his gratitude for the offer, but added that arrangements had already been made for conducting services in a parish hall. On occasions, however, when members of the congregation might wish to have a church ceremony take place in the Roman-Catholic church the offer would be accepted, subject to the approval of the Lutheran bishop.

Prize Contest on the Church in the City.

The Copenhagen Church Foundation which for the past 70 years has done a great piece of work for the erection of new churches in the ever-growing Capital has arranged a theological prize contest on the subject of "The Parish Congregation and its Service in the City of Tomorrow". The time limit is twelve months and a prize of 2,000 Danish crowns will be awarded to the best entry. The committee of judges will be constituted anonymously for the purpose and the committee of judges will be composed of the Professors Kai Koch and H. H. Ege, Mr. Mogens Rasmussen, Mr. Knud Lunde, and Secretary General W. A. Sørensen. Among the questions to be answered are: "Can we possibly speak of the Church as the Body of Christ when describing the actually existing Church with its manifold services?" - "Are there any points in the New Testament conception of the congregation and Luther's emphasis on the general priesthood which are wanting in the mission and service of a Danish parish congregation?"

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FINLAND

Women as Servants of the Word of God - But No Disunion.

Referring to the tension in the Swedish Lutheran National Church caused by the question of women pastors the Finnish religious paper "Kotimaa" writes:

"The Finnish nation has accepted as something natural that also women act as the servants of the Word of God in the congregations, as teachers and preachers. Hardly anybody would want this successful and blessed service to be discontinued. The only question is in what ways and how far this service should be developed in order best to serve the gospel. Opinions vary in this matter, but all are agreed on one thing: the gospel message and the Christian life should go forward in a Christian spirit. The question is too precious to be made the cause of disunion and bitterness."

There are no women pastors in the Lutheran National Church of Finland, but a great number of women divinity graduates are employed in the Church, although not entitled to administer sacraments.

Almost 20 Orthodox Churches Built in Finland.

When the Karelian peninsula was surrendered to the Soviet Union after the Finnish-Russian War the Karelian population, which to the greater part was Orthodox, was transferred and settled in new homes all over the country. The situation brought great difficulties to the Orthodox Church, but both the State and the Lutheran population gave a hand so that eventually almost 20 new Orthodox churches and a still greater number of devotional halls were erected in those parts of the country where the Orthodox members now live.

The Orthodox Church in Finland, recognized by the State as a national church on a par with the Lutheran Church, has 67,000 members, 55,000 of which were formerly living in Karelia. The Church is under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, but is also in contact with the Patriarchate of Moscow which has recognized its present jurisdictional status.

For 42 years the Church has had its own ecclesiastical college and convent and monastery at Heinävesi. The monastery at Valamo was moved here during the war, but now only a few monks remain there. The nunnery at Lintula, on the other hand, has received several requests for admission to the Order during recent years.

12 Clergymen at Trade Union Course.

On the invitation by the Swedish management of the Central Board of the Trade Unions 12 clergymen from the Swedish Diocese of the Lutheran National Church in Finland took part in an informative course at the Trade Union Institute at Kiljava last month. Here two trade union leaders, Mr. Runar Gustafson and Mr. Olle Saarinen, spoke on the history of the trade union movement and its place in society. There followed a lively discussion in a genuinely positive atmosphere.

The clergymen's visit to the Trade Union Institute was a kind of return visit as a number of trade union representatives some months ago took part in a social-ethical conference at the Laymen's Institute at Märkulla, invited by the social committee of the Home Mission Board of the Swedish Diocese.

It was decided at the course held at Kiljava to try to conduct a couple of joint social-ethical contact meetings in the autumn in the province of Österbotten.

Parents of Candidates for Confirmation Attend Classes.

A minister in Helsinki (Helsingfors), Rev. Kenneth Renlund at the Leijonan Church, has given a systematic and regular instruction to the parents of candidates for confirmation, an undertaking which has been attempted in other places also.

In an interview in the weekly paper "Församlingsbladet" he says that during the period when the children are being prepared for confirmation the parents meet once a month for lectures on the Confession, Sunday church services, the Eucharist, and congregational youth work as well as discussions on actual problems related to the instruction for confirmation.

With such a good experience of his "instruction for confirmation" given to the parents, Mr. Renlund intends to continue this practice, as it gives valuable contacts with homes in the parish.

Church Objection to Slot Machines for Contraceptives.

The Social-Hygienic Association has applied to the municipal authorities in Helsinki (Helsingfors) for permission to put up slot machines for contraceptives in public conveniences. The application having been recommended by the Corporation and the health authorities, 14 members of the City Council have written to the Corporation asking them to turn down the application or at least not to make any decision without previous proper expert investigations.

When the matter came to the knowledge of the public many people objected to the installation of such slot machines. The weekly "Församlingsbladet" would call such a permission by the Corporation "a serious blow to the moral health of our young people" since it would tend to neutralize young people's views on sexual life. In a letter to the Corporation the Bishop of Helsinki (Helsingfors), Bishop Martti Simojoki, has appealed to them to consult people with practical experience and expert knowledge in educational matters. The Bishop stresses the fact that the responsibility of the Corporation is so much the greater as its decision may well be taken as a pattern by the rest of the country. Among other things, the Social-Hygienic Association supported its application by a reference to the importance of contraceptives in the campaign against venereal diseases, but the Bishop feels that the problem is not a mere question of physical health. The Corporation is also responsible for the moral effect of such machines on the coming generation, Bishop Simojoki writes.

Criticism of the Attitude Taken by the Finnish Missionary Society in the Race Question.

In a leader the Swedish weekly "Församlingsbladet" deplores the "conspicuous silence" observed by the missions of the Church of Finland in the present conflict in South Africa. "One has waited in vain for an official statement on the views of the Mission on the race question", the leader reads and goes on to criticize that the Finnish Missionary Society has done very little to explain the background for the present interest to the friends of the Missionary Society and to the public.

The "Församlingsbladet" dissociates itself from the attempt of the Dutch Reformed Church to defend race discrimination by references to the Old Testament and emphasizes the equality of the races in the eyes

of God as expressed in the New Testament, and the paper concludes: "It is important that our Church and its Missionary Society declares their adherence to the New Testament."

Reorganization of Parish Registers Postponed until 1962.

The reorganization of the parish registers in Finland mentioned in GN No. 57 will not be introduced on January 1st, 1961. as first planned, but only from January 1st, 1962. Both the Bishops' Conference and the Enlarged Bishops' Conference which met at the end of April were in favour of postponements, as such a reform would have so farreaching consequences that a further investigation of the matter would be necessary. For this reason a committee was set up by the Enlarged Bishops' Conference. Other suggestions made by the former committee were approved in principle.

NORWAY

New Norwegian Minister of Church Affairs on the Relation between State and Church.

As part of the reorganization of the Government in Norway the present Director of Education in Oslo, Mr. Helge Sivertsen, has succeeded Mr. Birger Bergersen as Minister of Church Affairs and Education. Mr. Sivertsen has formerly been Permanent Secretary in the same Ministry.

On taking over his office the new Church Minister in an interview given to the religious daily in Oslo "Vårt Land" said: "It seems natural to me to compare the attitude of the State to the Church with its attitude to art. We do not want to interfere in the choice of colours of a certain artist, but leave him to use his palette as he likes. But we should like to make the working conditions of the artist as good as possible in the circumstances. The same applies to the Church. It is our job to arrange the working conditions and to do our humble best to solve the problems which may crop up."

"Vårt Land" takes this to be a promising statement since it must mean that the Church will be allowed to live its own spiritual life in accordance with the message to which it is pledged.

Norwegian Foreign Missions in South Africa Clearly Opposed to Apartheid.

While large sections of the Lutheran Churches in South Africa have kept conspicuously quiet in the matter of the Government's race policy the Norwegian foreign missions have clearly stated their position. At a missionary conference in South Africa the missionary, Rev. Andreas Økken, spoke on the Apartheid-policy which he said was not only a hopeless anachronism, but also un-Christian, inexcusable, unjust, and contrary to the manifest will of God. It springs from the prejudices, egoism and fear, of the white people, the minister said, and went on to dissociate himself from the plan of establishing an independent state for the Africans, Bantustan, since it was quite obvious that this too would be dominated by the whites and their government.

In reprinting the address the main organ of the Norwegian Missionary Society, the "Misjonstidende" in a leader fully endorses the views expressed in the address and advocates a brotherly co-existence of the races.

The Bishops of the Norwegian Lutheran National Church have sent a letter to the Superintendent of the work of the Norwegian Missionary Society in South Africa in which they express their deep appreciation of the unambiguous and firm attitude of the address. The Bishops pray that the missionaries "may continue to be given wisdom and power to be Christian witnesses to the justice and compassion due to all races and all men according to the will of God."

"An Affront to Christian Workers".

In a leader the paper "Brorskap", organ of the "Union of Christian Workers in Norway", earnestly regrets that the traditional Social-Democratic demonstration on May 1st had to take place at 11 a.m. as usual in spite of the fact that this year May 1st was a Sunday so that the demonstration coincided with the hours of service. Those in charge of the arrangements thus showed a depressing arrogance and intolerance, the paper writes, and calls it "a stinging slap in the face of all workers who are deeply rooted in the Christian tradition". The paper appealed to all Christian workers to attend the services of the Church rather than take part in the demonstrations.

It has been the custom in Norway for a number of years to celebrate May 1st by church services at which Christian workers often deliver addresses and collections are taken to finance the arranging of devotions at factories and other similar purposes.

The weekly "Vår Kirke" published by the Oslo Inner Mission, has suggested, moreover, that the celebration of May 1st which is a public holiday in Norway should be given a wider aspect. At the moment it is predominantly celebrated as a commemoration day of the struggle of the Labour Movement for social justice which cannot really engage the nation, the paper writes and suggests that on May 1st the peoples living in hunger and privation elsewhere in the world should be remembered. "As a Church and a Christian nation we must not repeat the mistaken attitude still meeting us as an accusation of the 18th and 19th centuries: to do deeds of mercy and resign ourselves to the situation instead of fight for justice and changing the situation. The Christian nations of to-day are well-to-do nations. What is demanded of us now is not alms, but an encompassing solidarity with the starving and suppressed people among the coloured nations."

Attempts to Reduce the Study of Theology from 7 to 5 years.

For most undergraduates in Norway the study of theology takes 7 years, but now the Council of Professors at the Practical Seminary of the Independent Theological Faculty in Oslo has worked out a proposal for a rationalization and reorganization of the study so that it might once more be reduced to the former 5 years. The proposal which has been approved by the students at the Independent Theological Faculty will now be considered by the University Theological Faculty after which the proposal may go to the Minister of Church Affairs for final decision.

Increased Co-operation between Church and Athletics.

At a contact conference between representatives of the Church and athletic clubs in the Diocese of Hamar, held last month at Tranberg, a number of points at which future co-operation might be increased were agreed upon.

Both parties at the conference being extremely positively inclined towards each other, the result was a number of definite suggestions for

co-operation, such as, among others, the appointment of more sports ministers, contact meetings between local clergymen and the sports leaders before the opening of each season, annual divine services for the members of all the athletic clubs and short devotions in connection with sports meetings.

The general agreement says that the Church and athletics are both responsible for the physical as well as the mental health of the nation, and from this point of view certain conclusions are drawn with regard to a joint effort. As to the relations between athletics and the Church the agreement states that they are both independent institutions with their own objects, but that co-operation between them is also a natural thing since most athletes belong to the Church and because the Church and the athletic clubs have the care of the nation's physical and mental health in common.

Bishops Object to Mormons Taking Photographs of Church Registers.

In a letter to the Ministry of Church Affairs the Bishops of the Norwegian Lutheran National Church have objected to the Mormons being allowed to take photographs of parish registers and census-papers kept in the Record Office which are to be used by Mormons now living for baptism by proxy of deceased relatives.

The Keeper of the Public Records has explained to Bishop Johannes Smemo, Oslo, that the documents in question are accessible to the public and that, consequently, there has been no need for the Mormons to apply to higher authorities for permission to photograph the records. The Mormons have presented the Record Office with a copy of all the documents photographed and the value of this amounts to more than one million crowns.

The Bishops remind the Ministry that as early as in 1948 when the first photographs of parish registers were taken Bishop Eivind Berggrav in a letter to the Ministry of Church Affairs described the contract between the Mormons and the Record Office about the photographing as an outrage. They feel that the study of records in a reading room cannot be compared with the taking of photographs by the Mormons. The latter must be considered an improper encroachment on privacy and the Bishops regard it as their duty "to arouse a healthy public opinion and reaction against that kind of disrespect". In their letter they request the Ministry of Church Affairs to put a stop to the new series of photographs started this year by the Mormons.

Less Time for Religion in School Curriculum.

While the subject of religious instruction in the present normative curriculum of the Norwegian public schools is allotted a minimum of 14 hours a week in the course of 7 years of school the new curriculum allows for only 14 1/2 hours in the course of 9 years of school. This information was given by Head of the Institute for Christian Upbringing, Mr. Bjarne Hareide, in an article in the daily paper "Vårt Land". He maintains that the subject which once was one of the major subjects in school has thus been reduced to the state of a subsidiary subject.

News in Brief:

The Norwegian Bible Society has decided to publish an edition of the "young people's translation" of the New Testament both with and without foot-notes. The decision is made in answer to the objections

raised to the Bible edition provided with foot-notes of a somewhat dogmatic nature (see CN No. 54).

- The newly established Institute for Ecumenical Contacts in Oslo has invited to an international ecumenical youth conference in Oslo from August 2nd-10th. The main subject at the conference will be "Young People in To-Day's Society".

SWEDEN

Clergymen in Favour of Resignations from the Church in Writing.

The Board of the Swedish Clergymen's Association has resolved to recommend a Bill proposing that in future resignations from the Swedish Lutheran National Church may also be done in writing. So far resignations have had to be done in person before the local Rector. The reason for the decision of the Clergymen's Association is a feeling that the freedom of conscience of the individual must be safeguarded and that the Church has no occasion to make it difficult for people to resign their membership in the Church if they want to do so.

The position of the Clergymen's Association has caused attention since the Church Assembly in 1958 were opposed to a Bill passed by Parliament allowing resignations to be done in writing also. Parliament has now once more carried a Bill to this effect and if the Bill is approved by the next Church Assembly - probably in 1961 - it will become law. The Bill stipulates that resignations must be done individually, thus it will not be possible to send in a whole list of names of people wanting to resign.

Statement Desired on the Activities of the Church in Case of War.

Archbishop Gunnar Hultgren has requested the Ministry of Church Affairs to set up a committee to plan for the activities of the Swedish Lutheran National Church in case of war, and especially with regard to the responsibilities of clergymen in times of war. It is suggested that the Church, the military authorities, and the civil defence forces should be represented on such a committee.

Pentecostal Missions in the Congo Become Independent.

The congregations established in the eastern part of the Belgian Congo as a result of the work there of the Swedish Pentecostal Mission will probably become independent in the near future, according to information given at the missionary conference held in Stockholm at the end of April. The plan is to hand over the full responsibility for missionary activities on the mission field to the native Church, if possible simultaneously with the Belgian Congo becoming an independent state on June 30th. This month two of the leaders of the Swedish Pentecostal Movement have left for the Congo in order to conduct the final negotiations with representatives of the native congregations.

The Pentecostal Movement in Sweden employs app. 130 missionaries in the Congo where work has been going on since 1921. The missions in the Congo number more than 40,000 members and there are 42,000 pupils in the schools.

It is already some time since the Swedish Mission Covenant Church decided to give full independence to its mission church in the Congo (see CN No. 55).

No Increase of the Aid to Underdeveloped Countries.

A Bill granting altogether 20.9 million Swedish crowns in aid of underdeveloped countries as a gift from the Swedish nation has been passed by Parliament. As mentioned in CN No. 55 the Liberal Party had moved that the amount should be raised to 27.5 million crowns, but the motion was not carried. Judging from the debate there should be great possibilities for raising the grant during the next session.

The proposal that the Swedish foreign missions in the different countries should be in charge of the distribution of some of the money also mentioned in CN No. 55) was not opposed in principle, but no final decision was made.

Free Churches Neglected in Television and Radio".

In a leading article the daily paper "Expressen" in Stockholm has objected to the distribution of transmissions of divine services in television and radio between the Lutheran National Church and the Free Churches. The paper notes that the transmission in television on Easter Day was the sixth National Church programme in succession since the Day of Ascension on March 6th, and that out of 20 religious broadcasts in the radio between Advent and Easter only 3 were of Free Church origin. Furthermore, the leader goes on, the Lutheran National Church has for years had a monopoly on the radio services on the principal day of the high festivals of the Church. The paper asks whether this is evidence of a deliberate Church policy on the part of the management and, if so, describes it as being a most serious matter.

A leader in the Baptist weekly "Veckoposten" supports the "Expressen" in the criticisms.

Changes in Structure of the Free Churches?

"Quite obviously significant changes have taken place in the structure of the Swedish Free Churches", Mr. Harry Källmark concludes his article "Ecclesiastical Inheritance in the Free Churches" in the Pentecostal Movement's newspaper "Dagen". He proves the influence of the Lutheran National Church at a number of points, such as: the wearing of special clerical garb by preachers, altars in many churches where there were none before, the "prayer houses" now being called "churches", the churches being decorated with traditional ecclesiastical symbols, the appointed texts of the National Church being widely used and certain liturgic forms being borrowed, and an increasing weakening of the special Free Church nature of both sacred music and hymns in favour of influence from the National Church traditions.

Gambling Machines for the Red Cross?

The news that the Swedish Red Cross will apply to Government for permission to set up gambling machines, the proceeds of which would go towards the relief work of the Association, has caused the Baptist weekly "Veckoposten" to put the question whether Sweden is becoming an actual gambling den. It must be deplored that the Red Cross feels it necessary to go to such lengths in order to get money for a good purpose, and the paper likewise regrets that the Trade Union National Organization must arrange a million crowns lottery in favour of aid to underdeveloped countries.

Increase of the Aid to Underdeveloped Countries.

A Bill granting a total of 20 million Swedish crowns in aid of underdeveloped countries as a gift from the Swedish people has been passed by the Riksdag. As mentioned in the Riksdag's report, the amount should be raised to 25 million crowns, but the motion was not carried. Judging from the debate there should be great possibilities for raising the grant during the next session. The proposal that the Swedish foreign missions in the different countries should be in charge of the distribution of some of the money was mentioned in GN No. 25, was not opposed in principle, but no final decision was made.

Churches Neglected in Television and Radio.

In a leading article the daily paper "Expressen" in Stockholm has pointed to the distribution of transmission of divine services in television and radio between the Lutheran National Church and the Free Church of Sweden. The paper notes that the transmission in television on Easter Day is the sixth National Church programme in succession since the Day of Pentecost on March 6th, and that out of 20 religious broadcasts in the time between Advent and Easter only 3 were of Free Church origin. Furthermore, the leader goes on, the Lutheran National Church has for years had a monopoly on the radio services on the principal day of the high festivals of the Church. The paper asks whether this is evidence of a liberate Church policy on the part of the management and, if so, describes it as being a most serious matter.

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Smuggling Machines for the Red Cross?

The news that the Swedish Red Cross will apply to Government for permission to set up smuggling machines, the proceeds of which would go towards the relief work of the Association, has caused the Baptist weekly "Veckoposten" to put the question whether Sweden is becoming in actual smuggling. It must be deplored that the Red Cross feels it necessary to go to such lengths in order to get money for a good purpose, and the paper likewise regrets that the Trade Union National Organisation must arrange a million crown lottery in favour of aid to underdeveloped countries.

With this in mind the paper asks whether religious organizations making use of small lotteries in support of their activities ought not to avoid it since the interest for lottery and gambling has grown to such extents that it seems to disclose a national weakness.

I.B.R.A. Erects Station in Liberia.

The I.B.R.A. Radio, run by the Swedish Pentecostal Movement, has decided to build a broadcasting station with a strength of 100 kilowatts in Liberia. The evangelical programmes to be broadcast from there are expected to be able to reach to all parts of Africa.

The President of Liberia has promised to grant a building permit and the Minister of Communications was also favourably disposed when Rev. Lewi Pethrus visited Liberia recently in order to negotiate on the matter.

The I.B.R.A. formerly broadcast from Tangiers, but the programmes were stopped by the Government there in December last year.

News in Brief:

The publishing house of the Swedish Home Mission Board has published a book by the Secretary of the Social Committee of the Swedish Ecumenical Council, Mrs. Anne-Marie Thunberg, on Rapid Social Change in Asia and Africa during the last few decades under the title of "Continents Breaking Up".

Papal Infallibility and Ecumenicity.

The Roman Catholic periodical "Civiltà", founded in 1929, recently brought an interesting article dealing with the development of the doctrine of the Infallibility of the Pope and the importance it attaches to the unity of the Christians.

The article remarks that the Roman Catholic Church has never given up any of her once claimed verities of Faith, including the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. But just as the formulation of the dogma was the result of a historic development, so it is subject to a further development which may put them in a new and unexpected light. The article goes on:

"The doctrine of the Vatican Council about the infallibility of the Pope must, of course, stand as a basis - but it is not enough to carry theology a step further in the understanding of the organic connection between the office of teaching and the whole structure of the Church, of the relation between leaders of Christ and the members of the Church (in as much as the latter cannot, even passively with regard to the Infallibility of the Pope, or the relation of the Pope to the bishops, or the difference and complementarity

With this in mind the paper asks whether religious organizations using use of small lotteries in support of their activities ought not avoid it since the interest for lottery and gambling has grown to an extent that it seems to disclose a national weakness.

I.B.R.A. Erects Station in Liberia

The I.B.R.A. Radio, run by the Swedish Evangelical Movement, has decided to build a broadcasting station with a strength of 100 kilowatts in Liberia. The evangelical program is to be broadcast from there and is expected to be able to reach to all parts of Africa.

The President of Liberia has promised to grant a building permit to the Minister of Communications was also favorably disposed when Jami Petrus visited Liberia recently in order to negotiate on the matter.

The I.B.R.A. formerly broadcast from Tangiers, but the program was stopped by the Government there in December last year.

Two in Brief

The publishing house of the Swedish Home Mission Board has published a book by the Secretary of the Social Committee of the Swedish Evangelical Church, Mrs. Anna-Marie Thunberg, on Rapid Social Change in Asia and Africa during the last few decades under the title of "Social Change Breaking Up".